FROM THE WORLD OF HELLBOY
DARK HORSE COMICS
CURIOUS OBJECTS
1 of 4
SHADOW OF THE GOLDEN CRANE™
AVON24
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SHADOW OF THE GOLDEN CRANE™

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"WHEN WE WERE LITTLE, OUR GRANDPARENTS TOLD US STORIES ABOUT OUR ANCESTORS.
"AND ABOUT THE GOLDEN CRANE SOCIETY.
"HOW THEY PROTECTED PEOPLE FROM MONSTERS, AND GHOSTS, AND DEMONS.
"BUT I THOUGHT THAT'S ALL THEY WERE. STORIES."

THE BUREAU FOR PARANORMAL RESEARCH AND DEFENSE HEADQUARTERS IN FAIRFIELD, CONNECTICUT-- JULY 1963.
SUSAN XIANG, HEAD ANALYST OF THE INTELLIGENCE DIVISION OF THE B.P.R.D.
LINDA, I KNOW THAT I SAID THAT, BUT I JUST DON'T THINK I'LL BE ABLE TO--
SORRY, TALK LATER, SOMETHING HAS COME UP.

HELLBOY.
EVER BEEN TO PORTLAND BEFORE, VIC?
VICTOR KOESTLER, FIELD AGENT OF THE B.P.R.D.
HELLBOY, WAIT! I NEED TO COME WITH YOU!
WHAT'S THE MATTER, BORED OF BEING A DESK JOCKEY ALREADY?
I HAD A VISION.
SUSAN!
NOW! DO IT NOW!
GO GRAB YOUR THINGS, WE'LL WAIT FOR YOU.

PORTLAND, OREGON
LOOKS LIKE THE BIG GUY COULD USE A HAND.
GET IN THERE, I'VE GOT CROWD CONTROL.
EVERYBODY, MOVE BACK TO A SAFE DISTANCE!
OOOK!

OOK!
IT'S ABOUT TIME, KID.
ROAR!
SLASH
OOK!
HAD ABOUT ENOUGH OF THIS.
"THERE'S SOMETHING AROUND ITS NECK...

ROAR!
SLAM
HAVE TO LEAD IT AWAY FROM THE CROWD.
COME ON, YOU BIG UGLY THING.
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
BUMP
"THE INSTANT THE CREATURE BRUSHED AGAINST ME, I COULD SEE IT ALL."

"MEN. WOMEN. CHILDREN.
"DOWN THROUGH THE YEARS.
"SO MANY VOICES.
"BUT ONE, LOUDEST AND CLEAREST OF ALL.
"LADY BAI LIAN."

"I COULD SEE HER MEMORIES OF BEIJING AT THE END OF THE LAST CENTURY."
⟨TRANSLATED FROM MANDARIN⟩
⟨PLEASE LET US PASS.⟩
⟨ANOTHER MURDER! I TELL YOU, IT IS THE FOREIGNERS WHO ARE TO BLAME.⟩
⟨HONORABLE SIR, IF WE COULD BUT SPEAK TO YOU A MOMENT.⟩
⟨AND WHO ARE YOU, THAT I SHOULD LISTEN TO YOU?⟩
⟨MY YOUNG ASSOCIATE AND I HAVE SOME EXPERIENCE IN THESE MATTERS.⟩
⟨HUANG YI, IF YOU WOULDN'T MIND?⟩

⟨OH, I SEE.⟩
⟨BACK TO YOUR HOMES, EVERYONE. THE MATTER IS WELL IN HAND.⟩
⟨THE THIRD SUCH KILLING IN AS MANY DAYS.⟩
⟨AND MORE YET TO COME, I FEAR.⟩
⟨WE NEED TO FIND WHOEVER-- OR WHATEVER-- IS RESPONSIBLE BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE.⟩

"THEY LEARNED THAT THERE HAD BEEN EVEN MORE UNEXPLAINED DEATHS AMONG THE FOREIGNERS WHO LIVED ALONGSIDE THEM.
"WITNESSES CLAIMED TO HAVE SEEN SOME TYPE OF CREATURE NEAR THE SITES OF THE ATTACKS.
"IT WAS CLEAR THAT THERE WAS SOMETHING STRANGE AT LARGE IN THE CITY.
"AND WHILE THEY SEARCHED, STILL MORE VICTIMS WERE FOUND."

"AND BY NIGHT, THEY KEPT A CAREFUL WATCH."
⟨IF IT'S A DEMON THEN WHOEVER CONJURED IT COULD STILL BE IN THE AREA.⟩
⟨OR COULD HAVE BEEN ONE OF THE EARLY VICTIMS, I SUPPOSE--⟩
⟨WAIT. I HEAR SOME-THING.⟩
⟨I DIDN'T HEAR--⟩
FWOOOSH

ROAR!
‹SOMEONE! HELP US!›
‹REMEMBER YOUR TRAINING, HUANG.›
:SOB:
‹GET TO SAFETY, I'LL HANDLE THE CREATURE.›

SLASH
GRN.
⟨STRANGE...⟩
⟨WHAT IS THAT THING, MISTRESS?⟩
⟨STILL TRYING TO WORK IT OUT.⟩
SMASH

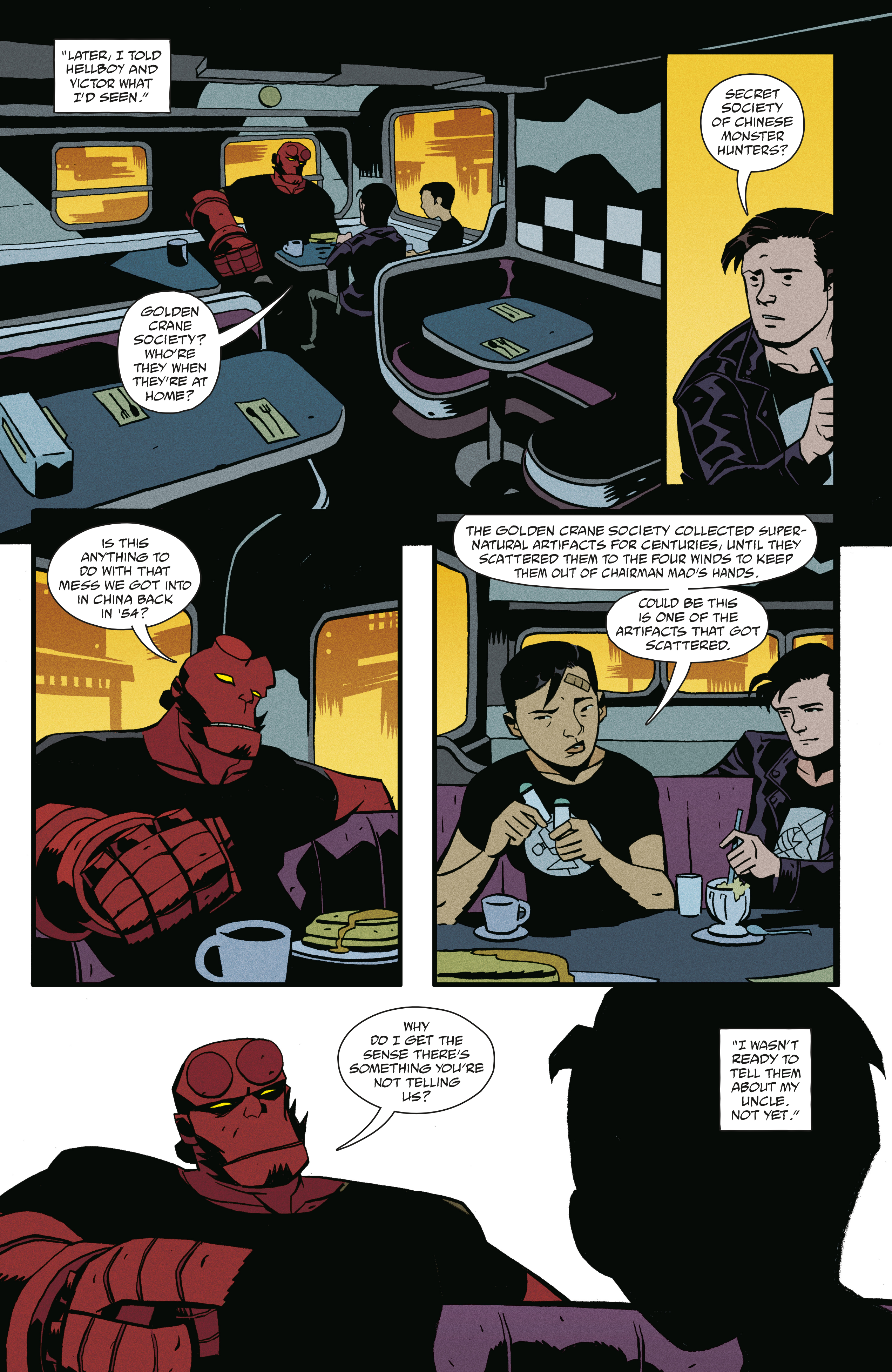
⟨AH, I SEE IT NOW.⟩
ROAR!
⟨HUANG!⟩
⟨GET THE CREATURE'S ATTENTION, I HAVE AN IDEA.⟩

‹ARE YOU SURE THAT'S WISE?›
ROAR!
‹DO IT NOW!›
‹HEY! OVER HERE!›
RRRR!
‹ALMOST...›
‹GOT IT!›

BAAA
⟨WHAT JUST HAPPENED?⟩
⟨I'VE ENCOUNTERED CURSED ARTIFACTS LIKE THIS BEFORE.⟩
⟨IF THE LIGHT WERE BETTER I'D HAVE SEEN IT SOONER.⟩
⟨A GOAT, ALL ALONG.⟩
⟨COME ON, I'M STARVING.⟩

⟨BUT WHY DID THE CHARM NOT AFFECT YOU LIKE IT DID THE GOAT?⟩
⟨PERHAPS IT COULD, WITH PROLONGED CONTACT. WHEN I TOUCH IT, I CAN ALMOST FEEL THE RAGE OF THE SPIRIT WITHIN.⟩
⟨WHATEVER IT IS, I THINK IT'S BEEN IN THERE A LONG, LONG TIME.⟩
⟨CAN THE CHARM BE DESTROYED?⟩
⟨AND RISK RELEASING THE SPIRIT WITHIN? NO, BETTER TO PUT IT IN THE GOLDEN CRANE SOCIETY VAULTS, WHERE IT CAN DO NO HARM.⟩
"AND AT LAST I UNDERSTOOD WHAT LADY BAI'S MEMORIES HAD BEEN SHOWING ME."

"THE VISION LASTED NO MORE THAN AN INSTANT, BUT I WAS LUCKY THE THING HADN'T TAKEN A BITE OUT OF ME IN THE MEANTIME.
GASP
"BUT NOW I KNEW WHAT WE WERE DEALING WITH.
HELLBOY! THE CHARM AROUND ITS NECK!
I'M ON IT!
SNATCH
?
MEOW


"LATER, I TOLD HELLBOY AND VICTOR WHAT I'D SEEN."
GOLDEN CRANE SOCIETY? WHO'RE THEY WHEN THEY'RE AT HOME?
SECRET SOCIETY OF CHINESE MONSTER HUNTERS?
IS THIS ANYTHING TO DO WITH THAT MESS WE GOT INTO IN CHINA BACK IN '54?
THE GOLDEN CRANE SOCIETY COLLECTED SUPER-NATURAL ARTIFACTS FOR CENTURIES, UNTIL THEY SCATTERED THEM TO THE FOUR WINDS TO KEEP THEM OUT OF CHAIRMAN MAO'S HANDS.
COULD BE THIS IS ONE OF THE ARTIFACTS THAT GOT SCATTERED.
WHY DO I GET THE SENSE THERE'S SOMETHING YOU'RE NOT TELLING US?
"I WASN'T READY TO TELL THEM ABOUT MY UNCLE. NOT YET."

I GREW UP HEARING STORIES ABOUT THE GOLDEN CRANE SOCIETY. I'VE KNOWN SINCE THAT MISSION IN 1954 THAT THEY WEREN'T JUST STORIES, I GUESS YOU COULD SAY.
GOD ONLY KNOWS HOW MANY OTHER GOLDEN CRANE ARTIFACTS LIKE THIS THERE ARE OUT THERE, JUST WAITING FOR THE WRONG PERSON TO PICK THEM UP.
I GET THE SENSE FROM MY VISION THAT WE NEED TO TRACK DOWN THE OTHERS, BEFORE SOMETHING REALLY BAD HAPPENS.
AND I CAN'T HELP THINKING THAT THIS IS ALL CONNECTED TO SOMETHING THAT HAPPENED TO ME A LONG TIME AGO.
THE GIRL IS UNDER MY PROTECTION.
TO BE CONTINUED